



Potomac Bonsai Festival

Three prominent American bonsai artists will be featured at the 2009 Potomac Bonsai Festival to be held at the U.S. National Arboretum on May 1st through the 3rd.

Harry Hirao is an Honorary NBF Director, a Bonsai Master, and the recipient of the prestigious “Ryoku Hakiju Yukosho” medal, awarded to him by the Japanese Agricultural Society for his contributions to the art of bonsai. Known as “Mr. California Juniper,” Harry will be styling one of his own junipers at a demonstration on Saturday morning.



Harry Hirao

The Curator of Weyerhaeuser’s *Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection*, **David DeGroot**, is an award-winning bonsai artist and well known author of numerous publications and articles including the best selling book, *Basic Bonsai Design*. During the course of the Festival, Dave will lead a Design Workshop, demonstrate how to create a bonsai from a collected tree, and lecture on “Bonsai, Art and Aesthetics.” He will also judge and critique the Potomac Bonsai Association (PBA) Regional Juried Show (see below), as



David DeGroot.

well as critique the annual PBA Bonsai Exhibit.

The satsuki azalea artist, **David Kreutz**, studied the art of Satsuki Care and Culture with **Tatemori Gondo** of Osaka, Japan for three years and is certified by Gondo-sensei as a first level instructor. The owner of *Satsuki Bonsai-en* in Missouri, Mr. Kreutz has taught in many venues throughout the United States. On Saturday and Sunday of the Festival, he will lead two workshops, one on creating a Satsuki Azalea Shohin Bonsai, and the other on designing a large Satsuki Bonsai. He will also lecture on the “Care and Development of Satsuki Bonsai.”

In addition to these “headliners,” the Festival will feature two major exhibits of trees. The traditional annual PBA exhibit of members’ trees will be displayed in the Administration Building. In the Special Exhibits Wing of the Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion, some of the area’s finest bonsai will be on display at the first PBA Regional Juried Show. The trees in this exhibit will be chosen by representa-

tives of NBF, PBA and the Museum staff from submissions by regional artists. As indicated above, David DeGroot will select the final three trees for awards, which will be given to the winning owners during the NBF Reception on Friday evening. On Sunday morning, Dave will critique all the juried trees for a limited audience.

In addition to all of these events, noted ikebana teacher **Bruce Wilson** will demonstrate the Japanese art of flower arranging in the Festival Tent on Sunday afternoon. Finally there will be numerous vendors selling



David Kreutz.

bonsai, tools and pots, and PBA will be staffing a “Getting Started” Booth in the vendor tent. This event will enable bonsai novices to learn about styling a bonsai, and local club information will be provided for future assistance.

Complete information on all the programs, including registration forms and fees, is available on the USNA website at <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Education/pbaevents.html#8>

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President's Letter



So far this year most of us have been trying to find the silver lining in the clouds that keep passing overhead. Against the backdrop of the worst economic

crisis since the Great Depression, we learn of the fire that destroyed **Bill Valavanis's** home, Weyerhaeuser's closing of its **Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection**, and the endless worries swirling around us. As far as NBF is concerned, the silver lining is that the Foundation and the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum are here for the long term.

One bit of very good news is that the Arboretum has received \$9 million to renovate the aging Administration Building. This project was approved some time ago but did not have funding. Now with the new money being granted to stimulate the national economy, this project can move forward.

In the Museum, we have been focusing attention on the renovation of the 30-year-old Japanese Pavilion, and have retained a number of experts to assist in this process, including the renowned Japanese landscape artist **Hoichi Kurisu** who

designed the gardens at the Morikami Museum in Florida and **Faye Harwell** of Rhodeside and Harwell who has worked on both of the courtyard projects.

We are also working with **Dr. Tom Elias** and the staff of the Museum to strengthen the Chinese Collection. For example, NBF Honorary Director **Xin Chanbao** recently offered 5 penjing to add to the Chinese Collection. This wonderful offer is being given careful consideration by the staff. Most of the trees in the current collection were donated by Dr. Yee Sun Wu in 1986, who also generously donated the funds to build the Chinese Pavilion at the Museum which was completed in 1996. And then in 2002 the Museum received an important donation of 10 trees from the late Stanley Chinn of Maryland.

Just as the ancient mountain juniper weathers all storms and brings forth new growth in the spring, we are making every effort to assure that the Foundation and the Museum will do the same. We look forward to seeing you at the Potomac Bonsai Festival at the National Arboretum on May 1st-3rd. We also hope that you are making plans to participate in the 6th World Bonsai Convention to be held in Puerto Rico on July 7-13. (see story below)

Felix

6th World Bonsai Convention

Amazingly four years have passed since NBF and the Museum hosted the 5th World Bonsai Convention (WBC) here in Washington, DC. The next WBC is scheduled to start in San Juan, Puerto Rico on July 7th and continue through the 13th. **Pedro J. Morales**, 6th WBC Chairman reports that over 200 people from 22 different countries already have registered for this great event. He has also extended the early registration discount until May 31, 2009 to give everyone the opportunity to attend at a savings.

Presenters include: **Tohru Suzuki** (Japan), **François Jeker** (France), **Salvatore Liporace** (Italy), **Wen Juan Chen** (China), **William Valavanis**

(USA), and **Xec Fernandez** (Spain), among many others. Tours of private collections are planned, and in addition to the traditional demonstrations and workshops there will be Olympic Challenge Events in wiring, carving and sketching. Individuals who have contributed significantly to advancing the art of bonsai in their country or region will be recognized for their work by a Gold Medal award, and the Governor of Puerto Rico, **Luis Fortuña**, will welcome guests at an opening ceremony in the San Juan Art Museum.

Complete information is available on the WBC 2009 website at www.worldbonsaiconvention2009.com

Bonsai Notes

- *Suiseki* from the *Keystone State* was a recent Museum exhibit that featured stones from the collections of former NBF Director **Jim Hayes** and current NBF Director **Sean Smith**. Photos of a selection of stones from the exhibit can be viewed on the NBF website at http://www.bonsai-nbf.org/site/exh-keystone_st_suiseki.html
- **Dr. H. Marc Cathey**, former Director of the U.S. National Arboretum and an Honorary Director of the National Bonsai Foundation, died in October, 2008. On November 23rd NBF, FONA and the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc. hosted a Memorial Ceremony honoring his many contributions to the Arboretum and the Museum. On that occasion a bench and a tree, *Franklinia alatamaha*, were dedicated in his honor at the Capitol Columns site.
- NBF Director **William N. Valavanis's** Upstate New York home was destroyed by a fire in January.



SLOPE STONE
Doha-ishi
Collected from South Central Pennsylvania
COLLECTION OF SEAN SMITH

Although the contents of the house were lost, his family is safe and he was able to rescue the draft of the album of the *First U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition*. This commemorative book documents the important exhibit that was held in October 2008, and it will be ready for distribution in May for \$65.00 plus postage. For more information see: www.international-bonsai.com or email Bill at WNV@internationalbonsai.com.

- NBF Director **Wayne Schoech** of *Stone Lantern* now has a blog, *Bonsai Bark*. Stories about the Museum and other items of interest are frequently posted by Wayne on the blog. A link to this blog is available on the Home



SCENIC LANDSCAPE STONE
Sansui Keijyo-seki
Collected from Southeastern Pennsylvania
COLLECTION OF JIM HAYES

Page of the NBF website: <http://www.bonsai-nbf.org>

- The National Bonsai Foundation will be a programming partner for *Fiesta Asia*, the annual Washington DC street fair and festival organized by the **Asia Heritage Foundation** in honor of Asian Pacific Heritage month. Scheduled for May 16th the event is expected to draw over 20,000 DC Metro area residents and visitors to a full-day of activities in downtown Washington.
- **Error Note**—The late Kaz Yoneda donated a “prostrate juniper” to the North American Collection. This was incorrectly identified in the Winter 2008 *NBF Bulletin* and we regret the error.

NBF Contributes to Lincoln Memorial Celebration

Just a few short weeks ago, under a thrilling blue winter sky, the National Bonsai Foundation had the honor of participating in the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission’s 200th Birthday tribute at the Lincoln Memorial. For the first time, with support from Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA) and NBF, the Arboretum was invited to provide

memorial wreaths for the annual ceremony. The beautiful evergreen wreaths, made of fresh natural materials from the grounds of the Arboretum, were created by the Arboretum’s talented floral designers under the direction of the Gardens Unit leadership.

The ceremony on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial featured remarks by

the **Honorable Ken Salazar**, Secretary of the Interior, and the **Honorable Richard Durbin**, Assistant Senate Majority Leader, along with performances by Broadway star **Michael Feinstein** and noted poet **Nikki Giovanni**. The official program brochure, distributed to VIP guests and other attendees, credited NBF, FONA and the Arboretum as follows:

Evergreen memorial wreaths for the ceremony were provided by the U.S. National Arboretum, with support from Friends of the National Arboretum and National Bonsai Foundation.

The U.S. National Arboretum is home to the original columns from the east portico of the U.S. Capitol Building. It was in front of these columns that Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated in 1861 and again in 1865.

Now installed at the summit of the Arboretum’s Great Meadow, the National Capitol Columns form an awe-inspiring sight against the sky, and a quiet spot for contemplating Lincoln’s life and his role in history.



Photo: Hannah Jayanti

Wreaths on display in the Lincoln Memorial.

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Lincoln Memorial Celebration —

Continued from page 3

This splendid day for NBF, FONA and the Arboretum culminated with a Congressional reception at the Capitol Rotunda, featuring an opening speech by **President Barack Obama**, and remarks by House Majority Leader **Nancy Pelosi**, Lincoln scholars **Doris Kearns Goodwin** and **Harold Holzer**, as well as other members of the Congressional leadership. **Thomas Elias**, USNA Director, **Kathy Horan**,

FONA Executive Director, and **Johann Klodzen**, NBF Executive Director, represented the organizations at the events.

The partnership with the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and the Arboretum's role in the ceremony was arranged by marketing consultant **Dana Faulkner**, serving as Launch Director for the Marketing Alliance for the National Arboretum. The Alliance was formed in 2008 by NBF, FONA and local real estate interests to generate greater visibility and impact for the Arboretum.

Changes on the NBF Board

James J. Hughes, former Curator of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, and **Dr. John Quinn** of Columbia, SC, were elected to three year terms on the NBF Board of Directors in late 2008.



James J. Hughes.

Jim needs little introduction to the NBF community as he has served on the NBF Board previously and was NBF Treasurer before his appointment to the Museum staff in 2002 as Assistant Curator. In 2005 he was appointed Museum Curator and served in that capacity until last year. Jim is an active member of the Potomac Bonsai Association in the Washington area and spends many hours with his bonsai and ornamental garden in Maryland.

John Quinn is a physician, specializing in anesthesiology. He also regularly provides medical care in developing countries. A bonsai practitioner for many years, he is an active member and



John Quinn.

past President of the Bonsai Club of South Carolina. In 2003 he was awarded second place in the Joshua Roth New Talent competition, and he has traveled in Japan visiting prominent bonsai nurseries. John is also the moderator of the Internet Bonsai Club.



Keiko Yamane.



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Thank you for your support of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

Keiko Yamane of Kamakura, Japan has been appointed as an Honorary Director of NBF. A bonsai student of Saburo Kato, she established "Kusamonobonsai" (Grass bonsai as an art form). Mrs. Yamane is the author of several books, including *Making Potted Wild Grass*, *Kusamonobonsai*, and *Yoseue of Alpine and Wild Grasses*. She also teaches kusamono classes on Japanese television and in Tokyo and her pioneering work in the art of kusamono has been featured in many publications.

Young Choe, who was elected to the NBF Board in the Fall, has resigned due to her appointment in January as the Propagation Horticulturist for the U.S. National Arboretum. She will continue her outstanding work with kusamono as a volunteer in the Museum and will be displaying her work in the upcoming *Autumn Arts of Nature* exhibit.